New tarrif policy

534. SHRI P. PRABHAKAR REDDY: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are going to announce a new tariff policy to spur exports;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the new policy would take adequate care for ensuring price competitions of Indian exports; and

(d) by when the new policy is likely to be put up in place?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI GINGEE N. RAMACHANDRAN): (a) to (d) There is no practice to announce Tariff Policy for exports by Government. However, every year in order to regulate import / export trade and to promote export of Indian goods, the Ministry of Commerce / Director General of Foreign Trade announces Export and Import (EXIM) Policy. This year Exim Policy for the year 2002-2007 is going to be announced by Hon'ble Commerce & Industry Minister on 31.03.2002 which will be effective from 01.04.2002. The Policy would contain various export promotion schemes so as to promote export of Indian goods including measures for ensuring its price competition in the global market.

Import duty on aluminium

535. SHRI AIMADUDDIN AHMED KHAN (DURRU):
SHRI C.M. IBRAHIM:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) the cost of production per tonne of aluminium in the country;

(b) the average price per tonne of aluminium in international market and the import duty imposed thereon; and

(c) the demand of the aluminium (Secondary) Industry, and the grounds adduced by them in support thereof and the reasons of turning down their demand?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE-(SHRI GINGEE N. RAMACHANDRAN): (a) The average cost of production of aluminium ingots varies from manufacturer to manufacturer, and in the FinancialYear 2000-2001 it varied from Rs. 47983 per tonne to Rs. 72029 (provisional) per tonne.

(b) The average price per tonne of aluminium in international market (London Metal Exchange Prices) for the year 2000-2001 was US $ 1444.05. With effect from 1.3.2002, the rate of basic customs duty on aluminium has been fixed at 15%.

(c) The aluminium (Secondary) Industry had requested for reduction in duty. The duty has been reduced with effect from 1.3.2002.

United India Insurance Company

536. SHRI C.M. IBRAHIM:
SHRI AIMADUDDIN AHMED KHAN (DURRU):

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have closed down the operations of United India Insurance Company in Hongkong;

(b) if so, reasons therefor, indicating the volume of Insurance business handled by the company in Hongkong;

(c) whether Government have reconsidered the decision in the context of entry of China into WTO; and

(d) whether Govt. have received any representation against such closure from the National Confederation of General Insurance Officers' Associations; and if so, the decision taken thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI BALASAHEB VIKHE PATIL): (a) and (b) The United India Insurance Company Ltd. has reported that the company has been incurring continuous losses during the last six years on their Agency operations in Hong Kong. As the business in Hong Kong has not been profitable, it has been decided by the Board of United India to close down the operations there.

The results of past three years' business are indicated in the following Table:-

(Rupees in Crores)

Details	1998-99	1999-2000	2000-01
Net Premium	35.90	36.02	72.80
Net Loss	10.87	22.69	21.98